flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate onto a stage having a flat surface in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage; and

irradiating said semiconductor film with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage.

10. (Twice Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display device comprising the steps of:

forming a semiconductor film over a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein said upper surface is an insulating surface;

flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate onto a stage having a flat surface and at least one suction inlet in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage; and

irradiating said semiconductor film with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage.

13. (Twice Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display device comprising the steps of:

forming a semiconductor film over a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein said upper surface is an insulating surface;

heating said substrate;

flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate onto a stage having a flat surface in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage; and

irradiating said semiconductor film with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage.

16. (Twice Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display device comprising the steps of:

forming a semiconductor film over a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein said upper surface is an insulating surface;

heating said substrate;

flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate onto a stage having a flat surface and at least one suction inlet in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage; and

irradiating said semiconductor film with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage.

19. (Twice Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display device comprising the steps of:

forming a semiconductor film over a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein said upper surface is an insulating surface;

heating substrate to crystallize said semiconductor film;

flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate

onto a stage having a flat surface in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage; and

irradiating the crystallized semiconductor film over said substrate provided on said stage with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam.

22. (Twice Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display device comprising the steps of:

forming a semiconductor film over a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein said upper surface is an insulating surface;

heating substrate to crystallize said semiconductor film;

flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate onto a stage having a flat surface and at least one suction inlet in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage; and

irradiating the crystallized semiconductor film with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage.

31. (Amended) A method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display device comprising:

forming a semiconductor film over a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein said upper surface is an insulating surface;

flattening said substrate by vacuum-sucking said substrate onto a stage having a flat surface in such a manner that said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage;

irradiating said semiconductor film with a laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage.